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The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-sixth year

Identical letters dated 22 June 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the position of Lebanon, in preparation for the comprehensive assessment that the Secretary-General will present in his forthcoming report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter issued as an official document of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 36, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nawaf **Salam**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 22 June 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Position of Lebanon in preparation for the comprehensive assessment that will be presented by the Secretary-General in his forthcoming report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006)

In preparation for the comprehensive periodic assessment that will be presented by the Secretary-General in his forthcoming report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), we would like to note that ever since that resolution was adopted, it has been the custom of Lebanon to present a paper that expresses its position with respect to the comprehensive assessment of the Secretary-General. Lebanon believes that from the day resolution 1701 (2006) was adopted, Israel has failed to honour its obligation to implement it or to withdraw from all occupied Lebanese territory, and has persisted in violating Lebanese sovereignty, thereby ensuring that no progress has been made in the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) with respect to obliging Israel to withdraw from all Lebanese territory and cease its infractions. Lebanon would like to draw attention to the following:

1. Lebanon reiterates its commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) and calls on the international community to bring pressure to bear on Israel to fulfil its obligation to implement that resolution in full. Since the last assessment, the Israeli enemy army has continued to violate Lebanese sovereignty in contravention of the provisions of resolution 1701 (2006). Those violations included the following:

(a) During the reporting period, the Israeli enemy army continued to violate Lebanese airspace, territory and territorial waters, committing 336 air violations, 149 land violations and 60 sea violations, in flagrant violation of Lebanese sovereignty and the provisions of resolution 1701 (2006), which calls for full respect for the Blue Line. Lebanon demands the immediate cessation of such violations.

Lebanon affirms that the some 8,362 air, sea and land violations of the Blue Line and Lebanese sovereignty committed by Israel since the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006) constitute a flagrant violation of the aforementioned resolution and all other relevant United Nations resolutions, the most important of which is Security Council resolution 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978. Between the Israeli onslaught on Lebanon in 2006 and February 2010 there were between three and four Israeli violations per day, in addition to repeated Israeli threats to destroy the infrastructure of Lebanon. Those violations threaten international peace and security and constitute a flagrant violation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Lebanon calls upon the international community to bring pressure to bear on Israel and oblige it to cease its daily violations of Lebanese sovereignty and to respect the international resolutions adopted by the United Nations.

(b) Lebanon reminds the international community yet again that Israel is seeking to undermine resolution 1701 (2006) by every means possible. On 7 December 2009, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared that resolution 1701 (2006) had collapsed.

(c) On 15 May 2011, despite the heightened measures taken by the Lebanese Army in relation to the commemoration of the Nakbah in Marun al-Ra's, which is located in southern Lebanon, Israeli enemy forces fired at a group of unarmed civilians who had gathered at the above-mentioned location to observe the occasion, killing 10 persons and wounding 112 others, some critically. The killing and wounding yet again of innocent civilians by the Israeli enemy is an act of aggression and reaffirms Israel's violation of Lebanese sovereignty and its disregard of United Nations resolutions. It also reaffirms the hostile nature of Israel, which has never hesitated to arbitrarily use force against civilians, in flagrant violation of international laws and norms, including international humanitarian law. Lebanon calls on the Security Council to shoulder its responsibility to maintain international peace and security. The Council should bring pressure to bear on Israel in order to compel it to end both its hostile policy towards Lebanon and its acts of provocation, and to hold it responsible for attacking and killing civilians.

(d) The networks of spies that were recruited by the Israeli enemy constitute a blatant aggression against Lebanon, an attack on its sovereignty and a flagrant violation thereof that contravenes international resolutions and, in particular, Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). More than 150 collaborators were recruited by Israel in order to assist its intelligence apparatus, and were under orders to undertake sabotage operations both within and beyond the areas of Lebanon in which the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) is deployed. Those spy networks threatened national security by infiltrating Lebanese society and civil and military institutions through the recruitment of collaborators to work in the interests of Israeli intelligence. Those collaborators were ordered to undertake sabotage operations that included the detonation of explosives, the assassination of prominent Lebanese citizens, terrorist activities and attacks on Lebanese infrastructure. The networks, by using the collaborators to gain control over the Lebanese fixed and cellular communications network and eavesdrop on Lebanese citizens, also constituted an infringement of the security of communications in Lebanon that continues to this day, given that those collaborators provided Israel with the frequencies of mobile telephone operators and their base transceiver stations and the passwords of their servers, in addition to providing precise, in-depth studies on the operational procedures of mobile stations. Lebanon lodged a complaint with the Security Council with regard to the spy networks that were cultivated in Lebanon by Israel, in which it detailed some of the sabotage operations that they carried out on the direct orders of the Israeli intelligence services. In that connection, the International Telecommunication Union Plenipotentiary Conference that was held in Mexico condemned Israeli piracy against the telecommunications sector in Lebanon.

(e) UNIFIL continues to exert every possible effort to ensure that Israeli forces withdraw completely from the area known as 14B, which is the Lebanese part of the village of Ghajar and the uninhabited adjacent area, and the Lebanese Government is continuing to cooperate with UNIFIL with a view to achieving that aim. Notwithstanding those efforts, the Israeli army continues to occupy the aforementioned area, in flagrant violation of its obligations under Security Council

resolution 1701 (2006), which provides that Israel must withdraw immediately and unconditionally from the village of Ghajar. Israel's procrastination with regard to withdrawal from the area known as 14B compels us to question the sincerity of Israel's commitment to implementation of that resolution and the extent to which the Security Council is capable of obliging that country to end its occupation. It is incumbent upon the international community to take action to ensure that Israel completely withdraws from the Lebanese part of the village of Ghajar and area 14B as soon as possible. The Israeli Government is attempting to temporize, regardless of the fact that such withdrawal does not constitute a concession, but is one of the key requirements of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006).

(f) Lebanon believes that the continued occupation by Israel of the Lebanese Shab'a Farms and Kafr Shuba hills constitutes a threat to stability and security. Lebanon requests the international community to bring pressure to bear on Israel to completely and unconditionally withdraw from all Lebanese territory, and urges the Secretary-General of the United Nations to intensify his efforts to ensure that Israel withdraws from that territory. Lebanon reminds the international community that, under the provisions of the relevant Security Council resolutions, Israel is obliged to withdraw from the Shab'a Farms and Kafr Shuba hills.

(g) Lebanon would like to bring to the attention of the international community yet again the fact that the maps relating to cluster bombs that Lebanon has received from Israel are incomplete and imprecise. Israel dropped those bombs randomly on densely populated civilian areas, thereby causing the death or injury of more than 400 persons, including 47 fatalities and 353 cases of severe and disabling injury. It should once more be underlined that the Government of Lebanon had its doubts about the precision of the maps that it received from Israel, and demands that information should be provided regarding the dates on which the cluster bombs that were used during the Israeli raids were dropped, together with the quantity and type of those bombs. It should also once again be stressed that the Lebanese Army has asked for aerial photographs or video footage of the targeted areas before and after the bombardments. Israel bears entire responsibility and should pay compensation for the deaths of numerous Lebanese citizens that have been caused by the cluster bombs and unexploded ammunition that were dropped by Israel during its onslaught on Lebanon, and for the numerous crimes that Israel has committed against Lebanon and its people. Lebanon urges the United Nations and donor countries to continue to address that issue, in order to protect the lives of innocent civilians, and to call for the Lebanon Mine Action Centre to be granted the necessary financial resources to enable it to carry out its mandate.

(h) The Israeli army has continued to use launches to conduct illegal patrols inside Lebanese territorial waters close to the so-called "line of buoys" that was positioned unilaterally and illicitly inside those waters. Israel makes the fraudulent claim that those buoys approximate the southern border of Lebanese territorial waters. The Israeli army has also continued to fire warning shots and launch grenades at Lebanese fishing boats. Furthermore, it regularly detonates explosive charges close to the aforementioned line, inside Lebanese territorial waters. In his twelfth report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2010/105), paragraph 29, the Secretary-General warned that those Israeli measures contribute to increasing tension between the parties. Lebanon does not recognize any line that has been put in place unilaterally, and considers that the Israeli measures are a further violation of Lebanese sovereignty and Security

Council resolution 1701 (2006). Lebanon requests the United Nations to authorize UNIFIL to put in position in the region a line of buoys that is in keeping with international standards.

(i) On 9 July 2010, Lebanon deposited with the United Nations a map on which the southern maritime border with occupied Palestine is clearly marked, together with the exclusive economic zone of Lebanon. The geographical coordinates of the borders, which were set forth in accordance with international standards, are specified. On 11 October 2010, Lebanon also deposited with the United Nations two maps designating the south-western maritime borders of the aforementioned economic zone, together with two tables in which are set forth the geographical coordinates of those borders. In letters dated 4 January and 17 February 2011, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Emigrants requested the Secretary-General to instruct UNIFIL, in keeping with its mandate under relevant United Nations resolutions, and in coordination with the Lebanese Army, to demarcate a maritime security line similar to the Blue Line it has established on land. Such a line should correspond to the southern and south-western boundaries of the territorial waters and exclusive economic zone of Lebanon. That would be consistent with the role already played by UNIFIL in demarcating Lebanon's land borders.

2. The Lebanese Army is continuing to strengthen field and strategic cooperation with UNIFIL.

(a) The coordination between the Lebanese Army and UNIFIL is particularly evident in their joint patrols, joint checkpoints and joint military training operations and exercises.

(b) Lebanon stresses the fact that none of the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) has made any reference to indications that weapons are being smuggled into the UNIFIL area of operations. All weapons that have been seized are remnants of the war waged against Lebanon by Israel in the summer of 2006. Lebanon further stresses once again that the Lebanese Army and the Lebanese security apparatus have not reported any incidence of weapon smuggling since the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) was submitted to the Security Council.

(c) Israel's claim that weapons are being stockpiled and military installations established in densely populated civilian areas in South Lebanon bears no relation to the truth, and is designed to facilitate the targeting by Israel of innocent Lebanese civilians and justify their slaughter and terrorization, regardless of the fact that all international instruments and, in particular, those of international humanitarian law, outlaw and criminalize the targeting of civilians.

(d) Lebanon continues to participate in tripartite meetings that are held with a view to maintaining peace along the Blue Line. Those meetings are the appropriate forum in which to address issues pending from resolution 1701 (2006) and flashpoints along the aforementioned Line. Israel's persistence in resorting to unilateral measures undermines those tripartite meetings and the role of UNIFIL in maintaining the peace in its area of operations. Furthermore, those unilateral measures are intended to raise doubt as to the capacity of the Lebanese armed forces

to defend the sovereignty of all Lebanese territory, contrary to the spirit of resolution 1701 (2006).

(e) With respect to the positioning of markers along the Blue Line, Lebanon affirms yet again the agreement that was reached at the tripartite meeting with a view to making progress in and accelerating that operation. Israeli procrastination in that regard raises doubts as to its real intentions.

3. Lebanon stresses the importance of strengthening and raising the level of international assistance in building the capacities of the Lebanese Army and security forces and preparing them to perform their duty to defend Lebanese sovereignty and protect the Lebanese people. The Lebanese Army needs reinforcements of arms and ammunition and to acquire more modern means of surveillance and up-to-date communications equipment. It also requires training in the use of all such equipment and apparatus.

4. Notwithstanding the limited capacities and resources of the Lebanese Army, the Government of Lebanon has decided to deploy two additional battalions south of the Litani river, in order to further demonstrate its commitment to the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006).

5. At the economic level, we once more support the call that is made to the international community in resolution 1701 (2006) to extend more of the assistance that is necessary for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon. In that connection, we urge States that took part in the Stockholm Conference, Paris III and the Vienna Conference to honour their commitments. Lebanon greatly appreciates all economic and social programmes and humanitarian assistance that UNIFIL provides to the Lebanese people in its area of operations, including quick-impact projects and emergency medical services.

6. If stability and security are to be reinforced, there must be a transition from the situation of a cessation of hostilities to a state of permanent ceasefire.